



OT **ORANGE
TREE
THEATRE**
A powerhouse of independent theatre

ANNUAL REVIEW 2021/22

ORANGE TREE THEATRE 2021/22 IN NUMBERS



2021/22 OT AUDIENCE

22,792
TICKETS SOLD

6,902
VISITED FOR THE FIRST TIME
THAT'S **30%**

1,728
UNDER ♥ 30S

5,352
PEOPLE SAW 3 NEW PLAYS



PERFORMERS EMPLOYED

39



CREATIVES EMPLOYED

100

1,398

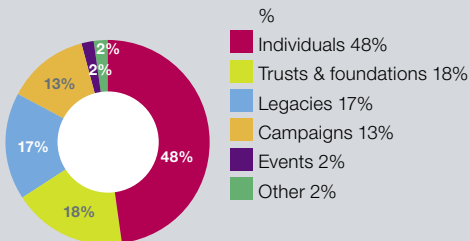
PEOPLE DONATED TO OUR
SURVIVAL & RECOVERY FUNDS

THANK YOU!
THANK YOU!
THANK YOU!
THANK YOU!

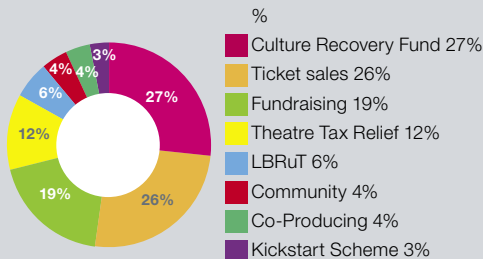
OT COMMUNITY

4,029
TOOK PART

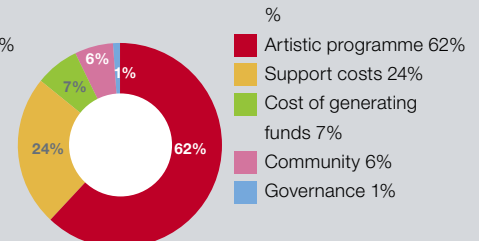
Fundraised Income 2021/22



Incoming Resources 2021/22



Resources Expended 2021/22



Welcome

Our first full season after the seemingly never-ending lockdowns of 2020-21 saw the OT steadily and surely return to its feet and flourish again after a dark period where its very survival had been threatened. Thanks to all our supporters, and the decisive intervention of the DCMS with the Culture Recovery Fund, we were back. That signature OT mix, so carefully developed over the last 8 years, of distinctive and unusual revivals, contemporary classics and unmissable new work, powered by the energy of emerging artists, meant we could look again at the world with a refreshed vision, at once serious and entertaining.

I have thoroughly enjoyed leading our exploration of plays and writers that have fallen out of focus of late, and this year included the return of a favourite: Terence Rattigan's *While the Sun Shines*. A smash hit pre-lockdown, it was a joy to see it come to life again for Christmas. And Marivaux's *The False Servant* offered a new thrill: both hilariously funny and darkly subversive. I've tried to programme rediscoveries like this that unexpectedly shine a light on things now, and Martin Crimp's version, which he revised for this production, suddenly reflected so many of the sexual identity questions currently occupying us all.

While the author and their play is always the main focus for me, during my time I have made a point of using the OT to platform emerging directors, and it's their energy that has

powered the new and contemporary work. Not only have we been uniquely placed to enable their development, but they and their chosen actors and designers have brought fresh ways of looking at the world, and ways of making theatre, into the building with every new production. This year I am once again proud of the work of directors Tinuke Craig, Diane Page, Nimmo Ismail, Diyan Zora and Oscar Toeman, whose work you can read about in this Review. They are all names to watch: we have been fortunate to both see and help shape the future here at the OT.

This season ended on a new high in July when OT Community Manager Stella Taljaard led our first cross-generational community performance, *Seven Celebrations*, directed by Jennifer Bakst. Featuring 60 performers aged 5 to 87, it was a truly joyous and profoundly moving event, with moments I shall never forget.

Each year we have achieved so much and it's always startling to look at these Annual Reviews for the sheer scope of what we do. This year, emerging from closure, we have especial reason to feel proud of such a rich and diverse programme: those two qualities are the vital combination, unlocking the close-up magic of a performance at the OT. I hope you enjoy reading all about it.

Paul Miller, OT Artistic Director 2014–2022

★★★★★

Honest, shocking and
heart-breaking...
exactly what
theatre should be

Afridziak



Artistic highlights



Last Easter

by Bryony Lavery
directed by Tinueke Craig

After reopening in May 2021 with *Shaw Shorts*, *Last Easter* took to the OT stage. Written by Bryony Lavery, multi-award-winning writer of *Frozen*, *A Wedding Story*, and *More Light*, this play presented a quartet of theatre friends on a pilgrimage looking for a miracle.

★★★★ **“Performs its own miracle in its warmth, gusto and celebration of life and friendship”** *The Guardian*



Statements After an Arrest Under the Immorality Act

by Athol Fugard
directed by Diane Page

Next came this rare revival of a classic play directed by Diane Page, winner of the JMK Award 2021. The play presents a love story interrupted by white supremacist law; a relationship that can never thrive in the light. This was our second production as partners with the JMK Award and one we were extremely proud to put on: a play about then that speaks to now.

★★★★ **“Beautifully written, performed with outstanding actors... honest, shocking and heart-breaking...exactly what theatre should be”** *Afridziak*



Rice

by Michele Lee
directed by Matthew Xia

In partnership with Actors Touring Company (ATC) and directed by their Artistic Director, Matthew Xia (*Amsterdam*, *Blood Knot*), *Rice* saw two Asian women with vastly different experiences of the working world form a powerful, if unlikely, bond. After it's UK premiere at the OT, *Rice* went on a nationwide tour.

★★★★ **“A powerful, thought-provoking and funny play about cultural identity, class, race and power told through two very different women, who form an unlikely friendship”** *Broadway World*

★★★★ I'd defy anyone
to remain unmoved

The Guardian





While the Sun Shines

by Terence Rattigan
directed by Paul Miller

After the first major London revival of Rattigan's delectably charming comedy in decades had an acclaimed sold-out run in 2019, *While the Sun Shines* came back to the OT in November 2021. Our most popular show in the Recovery Season, this Paul Miller production saw audiences through the winter with charm and wit.

Nominated for two Offies –
Supporting Performer (Rebecca Collingwood) and Production

★★★★★ **“Precise comic timing from the cast... a delightfully stylish evening of period style and a sprightly tonic for our times.”** *Plays to See*

★★★★★ **“Paul Miller’s delightful production fizzles with fun... Make hay with a glorious night of theatre.”** *Evening Standard*



Pinocchio

directed by Liam Shea

This enchanting new family show, directed by OT Community Director Liam Shea, was a hit with people of all ages last Christmas, featuring fairies, puppetry and a wild imagination.

★★★★★ **“The classic story is given a fresh new spin in this intimate kids’ show”**
Time Out



Two Billion Beats

by Sonali Bhattacharyya
directed by Nimmo Ismail

Bouncing with wit, this upbeat world premiere by Sonali Bhattacharyya is a coming-of-age story about the unfairness of growing up in a world where you don't make the rules. Sonali Bhattacharyya was Channel 4 Writer in Residence 2018 at the OT, where she wrote *Chasing Hares* (Young Vic, 2022), winning the Sonia Friedman Production Award and Theatre Uncut Political Playwriting Award. *Two Billion Beats* was originally commissioned and produced by the OT a short play as a part of our *Inside/Outside* livestreams in March 2021.

★★★★★ **“Moving portrayal of sisterly love...I’d defy anyone to remain unmoved”** *The Guardian*



Tom Fool

by Franz Xaver Kroetz
directed by Diyan Zora

This dark and unnervingly funny play showed us just how capitalism creeps into the minutiae of one family's life, at the very moment when women started to change the rules of the game. Directed by Diyan Zora, the winner of the 2021 Genesis Future Directors Award, most OT audience members will long-remember the glass-shattering fight scene.

★★★★ "A moving revival... nuanced and powerful performances" *Broadway World*

★★★★ "A gem from a playwright we should know more about... performances shot through with a painful beauty" *The Times*



The Misfortune of the English

by Pamela Carter
directed by Oscar Toeman

Inspired by true events, *The Misfortune of the English* is a story of (mis)adventure, blind optimism, nationhood and courage in the face of disaster. This UK premiere of Pamela Carter's work brought light to a story that has been buried for decades. Following his critically acclaimed, award-winning production of *The Sugar Syndrome*, Oscar Toeman returned to the OT to direct.

★★★★ "An impressive achievement... this briskly-paced story supplies its audiences with a surprisingly balanced account of a key event in interwar history" *LondonTheatre1*



The False Servant

by Pierre Marivaux
translated by Martin Crimp
directed by Paul Miller

The season closed with *The False Servant*, a wildly funny play written by Pierre Marivaux. This version by Martin Crimp was acclaimed at its 2004 National Theatre premiere by *The Telegraph*: "Thrills, chills, and belly laughs – this addictively adult comedy has got the lot." Martin Crimp's prolific international career began at the OT, including our recent hit revival of *Dealing with Clair*, making this production particularly special for Richmond.

★★★★ "Wildly funny and thoroughly enjoyable...this production completes a fantastic season and it feels as though the theatre hasn't just recovered, it's blossomed" *Theatre Weekly*

★★★★ The brilliance of the dialogue and performances, and the rambunctious humour, mean that it's impossible not to have a good time...

WhatsOnStage





OT Community



Play On

This year we welcomed 32 schools into the OT to experience the magic that was *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, directed by Fiona Drummond. This year's Primary Shakespeare was an outer space themed experience, that introduced children to the classical story in an exciting interactive way. Pupils had the opportunity to explore themes and concepts from within the plot through bespoke workshops delivered at schools.



PHOTOS: HARRY PLOWDEN

Seven Celebrations

The OT's first ever community festival was an overwhelming success. All seven of our outstanding community groups performed in a collaboration on the OT stage this summer. Sixty individuals aged 5 to 87 all shared the stage together in a devised ensemble piece that explored the meaning of the word 'Celebration'. Directed by Jennifer Bakst, Madi Mahoney, Hannah de Ville, Harry Gould and Scott Le Crass; this production was a triumph and a true breakthrough moment in OT Community history. We continue to build on this excitement, exploring how we can further expand our capacity to work with our community and offer more live performance opportunities to our dedicated groups.

Literary

Coming out of the pandemic, we continued to produce new plays and support emerging theatre artists through our programme of work at the OT, and our talent development programme the Writers Collective.

In our programme we supported the astonishing emerging director Diane Page as she directed her JMK Award-winning production of *Statements After an Arrest Under the Immortality Act*.

We produced the European premier of *Rice* by Australian playwright Michele Lee, in co-production with Actors Touring Theatre.

We also produced the world premiere of Sonali Bhattacharyya's *Two Billion Beats*. Sonali was a graduate of our Writers Collective, and was Channel 4 Playwright on Attachment to the OT in 2018. The run was so successful that it will return to the theatre in 2023.





Writers Collective

In January 2021 we opened up applications for our writer development programme, the Writers Collective. From 850 applications, we selected four exciting writers and one dramaturg to spend 18 months developing their craft alongside support from the theatre. Through masterclasses with artists connected to the OT, workshops and support from practitioners, they each began to work on a new idea for a play.

The writers were Jade Anouka, Tamsin Daisy Rees, Nimmo Ismail, Gemma Lawrence and dramaturg Cassiopeia Berkeley-Agyepong.

The Writers Collective was generously supported by the Idlewild Trust, the Garrick Charitable Trust and the Fidelio Charitable Trust.

“Thank you for such a wonderful time being part of the Collective. Whenever anyone asks me how I’m finding it, I always tell them how nourishing each session, meeting, workshop, and conversation is. It has been fundamental in developing my craft as a playwright and I’m so proud of the play I’ve written, and have you all to thank for that, for your encouragement, feedback, kindness, and support.”

Tamsin Daisy Rees

“It’s been a brilliant 18 months, in such a supportive and exciting environment. I’ve learned so much and I feel like a completely different writer coming out of it.”

Gemma Lawrence

“It has been a pleasure chatting with y’all and somehow I’ve ended up with a play by the end of it. Feeling very fortunate to have gone on this journey.”

Jade Anouka

Campaigns



Thank you

Having reopened in May 2021, we launched the Recovery Fund to support the OT's return to a producing powerhouse – with emerging artists at the heart of its unique programme of new and rediscovered work.

An incredible 1,398 people donated to this fund, thereby enabling us to produce the incredible programme of work outlined in this Review. Without each and every supporter, this simply would not have been possible.



50th Anniversary

Firmly into our 50th Anniversary year, and having returned to our usual bench seating, we switched focus in June 2022 to celebrating the theatre's history and future with the 50th Anniversary Fund.

Whilst we celebrated discovering...

- exciting new artists such as Sonali Bhattacharyya, Ned Bennett, Elinor Cook, Zoe Cooper, Nicola Coughlan, Martin Crimp, Tristan Fynn-Aiduenu, Nimmo Ismail, Alistair McDowall, Joe White
- important international artists like Maya Arad Yasur, Václav Havel, Branden Jacobs Jenkins, Mustapha Matura, Roland Schimmelpfennig, Emily Schwend and Lot Vekemans
- and rediscovering gems such as Rodney Ackland's *Absolute Hell*, Charlotte Jones's *Humble Boy*, DH Lawrence's *The Widowing of Mrs Holroyd*, Doris Lessing's *Each His Own Wilderness*, Clare McIntyre's *Low Level Panic*, Rattigan's *While the Sun Shines* and Shaw's *Candida*



...the ambition of the 50th Anniversary Fund was to enable us to develop the next generation of theatre-makers, and produce new and rarely-seen plays for years to come.

Thank you to everyone who has already donated to the Fund. This year alone, your support has helped us to produce outstanding work from emerging directors Diane Page and Indiana Lown-Collins, and to produce Marivaux's hilarious *The False Servant*. For more information about the 50th Anniversary Fund, visit [orangetreetheatre.co.uk/support-us](https://www.orangetreetheatre.co.uk/support-us). Thank you.

Thank you, as well, to the Museum of Richmond for holding a fantastic eight-month exhibition in celebration of our 50th Anniversary, and to everyone who contributed to it. Spectacularly curated by Laura Irwin, it was wonderful to see the highlights of our history on display in the heart of Richmond.

If you'd like to view the exhibition online, please go to <https://sites.google.com/view/ot50-exhibition/home-introduction>

Into 2022–2023



Indiana Lown-Collins

Partnership with the JMK Trust

Our partnership with the JMK Trust to host the annual JMK Award continued into autumn 2022. Indiana Lown-Collins was announced as the 2022 JMK Award winner, and opened her winning production *The Solid Life of Sugar Water* by Jack Thorne in October 2022. Each year, the JMK Trust provides talented young and emerging theatre directors with awards, guidance and development opportunities; we are proud to be able to take part by supporting the winning director and their production each year as part of our Artistic Programme.



Paul Miller

Artistic Director Paul Miller steps down

The biggest change ahead as we enter into 2022-23 is saying goodbye to Paul Miller as Artistic Director after nine years. From Paul's first day in post in 2014, on which it was announced the Orange Tree would lose its core funding (25% of its income) from the Arts Council, through to navigating a global pandemic, Paul has led the OT team fearlessly and with enormous generosity.

“After nine wonderful years at the Orange Tree Theatre, now is the right time for me to step down as Artistic Director and for a new person to lead the organisation into the future. I couldn’t be prouder of all the work that has been achieved in my time, with so many brilliantly talented colleagues and artists. We have produced over 70 shows and each one has had something special about them. Now is the perfect time for the OT to look to the future with renewed vision and purpose. It’s a unique theatre and I shall miss it very much. I am enormously grateful to the many colleagues, audiences and supporters who have made my OT



Hanna Streeter

experience the highlight of my life. As I leave to seek new challenges, I shall watch with excitement as the OT continues to develop.” *Paul Miller, OT Artistic Director 2014-22*

“It has been both a pleasure and a privilege to work with Paul. Through inspirational creative direction and far-sighted strategic leadership his time at the Orange Tree has been transformative.

Paul leaves a strong and resilient company with a stellar artistic reputation and a first-class team in place to take the theatre forward and build on his legacy.” *Richard Humphreys, Chair of the OT Board*

“I am truly honoured to have worked alongside Paul over the last three years. Navigating the pandemic with no core funding has been a seismic challenge, though with Paul’s tenacious leadership, artistic brilliance and overwhelming kindness, I never doubted that the OT would survive.” *Hanna Streeter, Executive Director*

Paul’s leadership has seen the theatre’s reputation soar, whilst its programme has

become more inclusive and more national in focus than ever before. Following the theatre's exit from the Arts Council's National Portfolio, Paul led the theatre through a transformation to secure its sustainability and in 2019/20 the theatre was projecting its first significant surplus.

“The Orange Tree continues to go from strength to strength under the leadership of artistic director Paul Miller... Only five years ago the future of this organisation was under threat after it lost its Arts Council England funding. Since then, it has transformed itself into a vibrant and forward-looking producing house and a key part of the UK's small-scale theatre ecology.” *The Stage Awards 2020*

Some of the incredible achievements presided over by Paul include five transfers to venues across the country – the National Theatre (*Pomona* and *An Octoroon*), Soho Theatre (*The End of Hope*), Manchester's Royal Exchange (*Pomona*) and Sheffield Theatres (*The Distance*); eight national tours; a total of 79 productions including 14 schools' productions; whilst he has directed 17 productions, including numerous sell-out successes such as *French Without Tears*, *Misalliance*, *While the Sun Shines* and *Candida*. *While the Sun Shines* was revived in 2020/21 following its record run in 2019, breaking sales records to become the theatre's highest grossing production selling 9,500 tickets, before this was surpassed the following year by *Candida*, with the UK premiere of Brandon Jacobs-Jenkins' *An Octoroon* representing the most successful new play, performing to 7,700 people before its transfer to the National Theatre.

“One of the most in-form venues in the capital thanks to Miller's inspired programming, which is some of the most astute and strategic around. He has made the Orange Tree blossom once more”
Fiona Mountford, Evening Standard

“Artistic Director Paul Miller has led an extraordinary string of successes at the Orange Tree” *Victoria Sadler*

In the community, under Paul the theatre has worked with almost 70,000 people through its education projects which take original language, modern interpretations of Shakespeare plays into primary and secondary schools; and its vast participatory Community programme, now working with all ages from babies and parents, Youth Theatre and Young Company, to adult companies for all ages and over 60s companies.

New work and emerging artists have been core to Miller's programme; in his tenure, the OT has helped raise the profile of artists such as Ned Bennett, Sonali Bhattacharyya, Zoe Cooper, Tristan Fynn-Aidueno, Alice Hamilton, Rania Jumaily, Alistair McDowall, Diane Page, Oscar Toeman, Chelsea Walker and Joe White, amongst many others. Since 2015, the OT has won 15 awards for its new work. Its history of developing directors was enhanced in 2019 when it became the new home of the annual JMK Award for directors.

“The Orange Tree is a seedbed for new talent” *Zoe Paskett, Evening Standard*

Under Paul, the OT has won the **Peter Brook Empty Space Award** (2017) and the **UK Theatre Most Welcoming Theatre** (London) Award for three consecutive years (2016-2019). Paul has also been recognised for his achievements at the OT, including being awarded **Best Artistic Director** (OFFIES, 2015), and nominations for Best Director (OFFIES, *Sheppey* 2017, *Poison* 2018) and an h100 nomination for his contribution to theatre in 2018.

Talk about revitalisation: Paul Miller in just a few short years has taken the reins at the Orange Tree Theatre and turned the safe-seeming west London venue into a producing powerhouse *h100 Awards*

Paul and Executive Director Hanna Streeter have carefully led the OT through the pandemic, and with the support of the Job Retention Scheme and the Culture Recovery Fund they prioritised retaining the skilled staff team, so vital to producing the wide range of work at the OT, until the theatre reopened in May 2021. In a transformed auditorium, Paul directed the first production in the theatre's Recovery Season, *Shaw Shorts*, to an audience capped at 70, less than 40% of its usual capacity. Paul's announcement to step down coincided with the OT re-installing our usual bench seating, ready to return to full capacity for the first time in two years.

“And another beloved theatrical destination roars back to life”
WhatsOnStage, May 2021

The Orange Tree: a theatre that punches far above its weight

Lyn Gardner, The Guardian



Welcoming incoming Artistic Director Tom Littler

In October 2022, the Orange Tree welcomed new Artistic Director **Tom Littler**. Since 2017, Tom has run Jermyn Street Theatre, winning the 2022 OffWestEnd Best Artistic Director Award after transforming the theatre into a producing house. Under his leadership, Jermyn Street Theatre won the 2021 Stage Award for Fringe Theatre of the Year and a 2022 Critics' Circle Commendation for exceptional theatremaking during lockdown, alongside the National Theatre and the Old Vic.

"I've loved the Orange Tree for many years, and I've hugely admired Paul's tenure at this local, London, and national theatre. I'm delighted to join such a brilliant team and help lead this unique theatre into a vibrant new chapter." *Tom Littler*

"Through a highly competitive selection process with many, very strong candidates it was clear that Tom's extensive experience and enormous success at Jermyn Street and beyond make him the perfect choice to build on Paul's legacy, and to take the OT to new heights"

Richard Humphreys

"I'm absolutely delighted that Tom is going to join the OT as the next Artistic Director. What he's achieved at Jermyn Street both pre and during the pandemic is extraordinary; I'm excited to work alongside him to produce new and ambitious programmes for our community and beyond." *Hanna Streeter*

At Jermyn Street Theatre, Tom has produced over forty full-scale productions and co-produced with theatres in Bath, Cumbria, Frankfurt, Guildford, Newbury, New York, Scarborough and York, and online with Digital Theatre and the London Review of Books. Over half the work has been new writing. During the pandemic, Jermyn Street

Theatre ran an award-winning programme of community work and digital theatre. Whilst at Jermyn Street Theatre, Tom created a trainee artistic directorship, appointed a cohort of Creative Associates from underrepresented backgrounds, and launched the award-winning Footprints Festival. Tom was previously Associate Director of Theatre503 and Artistic Director of Primavera.

Tom has directed throughout the UK and Europe and has been nominated for eight OffWestEnd Best Director Awards. Notable productions include the first West End revival of Noël Coward's nine-play *Tonight at 8.30* cycle; producing and co-directing *15 Heroines* (Jermyn Street Theatre and Digital Theatre); *Miss Julie* and *Creditors* (Theatre by the Lake, Jermyn Street Theatre); *Hamlet* with Freddie Fox (Guildford Shakespeare Company); *The Tempest* with Michael Pennington (Jermyn Street Theatre); *Dances of Death* (Gate Theatre); *Cabaret* (English Theatre, Frankfurt; Deutsches Theater, Munich) and Stephen Sondheim's *Saturday Night* (Jermyn Street and West End).

Thank you

As we come to the end of another year, we must say one last thank you. To all our Members and Patrons, our audiences who attended during our Recovery Season, whether at home or in person, anyone who donated to our Recovery Fund: thank you.

The ongoing support from our community has meant we could journey through our Recovery Season with strength. Since reopening we have rediscovered everything the Orange Tree stands for: allowing audiences to experience the next generation of theatre talent, experiment with ground-breaking new drama and explore plays from the past that inspire the theatre-makers of the present.

Thank you.

The Orange Tree would like to thank the following for their support in 2021 – 2022:



Haskel Family Foundation

Barbara Whatmore Charitable Trust



OT Angels

The Devey Family
Sue Howes & Greg Dyke
Richard Humphreys
David & Selina Marks
Elizabeth Pryce
Duncan & Kate Tatton-Brown
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Juliet Medforth
Laurence & Neil Monnery
Sue Salisbury
Dr Bhags Sharma
Eva Skorski
John Stapleton
Ros & Derek Sweeting
Anonymous

And all our anonymous donors, including those who included a gift to us in their will.

Ambassadors

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TW9 2SA

Registered charity number 266128

Company of 2021–2022

Naana Agyei-Ampadu, Uzair Bhatti, Scarlett Brookes, Will Brown, Hubert Burton, Peter Caulfield, Anoushka Chadha, Rebecca Collingwood, Fiona Drummond, Anna Francolini, Conor Glean, Zainab Hasan, Vinnie Heaven, John Hudson, Safiyya Ingar, Jodie Jacobs, Sophie Khan Levy, Philip Labey, Sarah Lam, Michael Lumsden, Eva Magyar, Jordan Mifsúd, Julian Moore-Cook, Ellie Piercy, Phoebe Pryce, Nathan Queeley-Dennis, Jonah Rzeskiewicz, Michael Shaeffer, Richard Sutton, Shaq Taylor, Matthew Tennyson, Lizzy Watts, Silas Wyatt-Barke



To come....?